

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652:

AGS: PFOR/PN

SUBJECT: SPEECH BY PANAMANIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED
STATES

FOR JORDEN FROM BELL

THERE FOLLOWS THE OFF THE RECORD REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR
GONZALEZ REVILLA BEFORE THE COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
IN NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 24, 1975.

1. MR. CHAIRMAN, DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL:

I AM VERY PLEASED THAT YOU INVITED ME HERE TODAY TO TALK
WITH YOU ABOUT A PROBLEM THAT IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE
TO MY COUNTRY AND MY PEOPLE. I KNOW, OF COURSE, THAT THIS
FORUM IS ONE IN WHICH ISSUES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ARE TRADI-
TIONALLY DISCUSSED DISPASSIONATELY, OBJECTIVELY AND WITH
BALANCE. I MUST TELL YOU CANDIDLY THAT I CANNOT TODAY
FOLLOW THAT TRADITION. I STAND BEFORE YOU, NOT AS A DE-
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TACHED DIPLOMAT, NOR AS A POLITICAL SCIENTIST ABOVE THE
BATTLE. I AM HERE AS A PANAMANIAN. AND I WOULD LIKE YOU,
DURING THIS BRIEF TIME TOGETHER, TO BE ABLE TO SEE OUR
COMMON PROBLEM THROUGH PANAMANIAN EYES, TO REASON WITH A

PANAMANIAN MIND, TO FEEL WITH A PANAMANIAN HEART.

2. I DO NOT WANT TO BURDEN YOU WITH A LONG RECITAL OF THE INTRICATE, AND OFTEN PAINFUL HISTORY THAT HAS BROUGHT US TO THE PRESENT MOMENT.

3. I WOULD, HOWEVER, REMIND YOU THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES ARE AMONG THE LONGEST IN HISTORY. IN OUR EYES, THEY HAVE BEEN GOING ON FOR 72 YEARS - SINCE THE INK WAS DRYING ON THE NOTORIOUS HAY-BUNAU-VARILLA TREATY OF 1903. THAT TREATY WAS NOT NEGOTIATED OR SIGNED BY PANAMANIANS. IT WAS SIGNED BY A FRENCHMAN WHO HAD NO REAL INTEREST IN THE FUTURE OF PANAMA. BUT HE DID HAVE A PROFOUND INTEREST IN THE VALUE OF HIS MAJOR SHAREHOLDINGS IN A BANKRUPT COMPANY WHICH THE UNITED STATES AGREED TO BUY OUT. AND WE HAVE BEEN TRYING TO CHANGE IT EVER SINCE--THUS FAR, WITH NO SUCCESS.

4. WE REMEMBER, TOO, THAT SOON AFTER THE TREATY WAS SIGNED, THE THEN SECRETARY OF WAR WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT ASSURED THE CONGRESS THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT HAD NO INTENTION OF CREATING A COLONY IN PANAMA. YET OVER THE NEXT DECADES, THAT IS PRECISELY WHAT WAS CREATED. INDEED, IT IS MORE THAN A COLONY. IT IS A GOVERNMENT WITHIN A GOVERNMENT. IT HAS ITS OWN POSTAL SYSTEM AND ISSUES ITS OWN STAMPS--WHICH NONE OF YOUR STATES CAN DO. IT HAS ITS OWN COURTS AND JUDGES, ITS OWN POLICE AND JAILS. AND ANY UNSUSPECTING PANAMANIAN WHO RUNS A TRAFFIC LIGHT OR EXCEEDS THE SPEED LIMIT IN THE ZONE IS SUBJECT TO THAT ALIEN JUSTICE--IN WHAT IS HIS OWN COUNTRY. WE CAN WELL IMAGINE THE HOWL OF PROTEST THAT WOULD GO UP IF AN ENGLISHMAN OR GERMAN, A SPANIARD OR A JAPANESE WERE TO BE ARRESTED IN ONE OF YOUR MILITARY BASES, TRIED IN YOUR COURTS AND SENT TO LEAVENWORTH OR ST. QUENTIN.

5. WELL, ENOUGH OF HISTORY AND PAST GRIEVANCES. PERHAPS WE CAN GO INTO THIS FURTHER--IF YOU WISH--IN THE QUESTION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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PERIOD. LET ME SIMPLY SAY THAT WE FEEL ABOUT THIS SITUATION AS ALL OF YOU, I AM SURE, WOULD FEEL IF THE FRENCH STILL CONTROLLED THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER AND A WIDE STRIP ON EACH SIDE OF IT FROM THE GULF OF MEXICO TO CANADA--RIGHT THROUGH THE HEART OF YOUR COUNTRY.

6. BUT THERE IS NO PROFIT IN RAKING OVER OLD COALS. LET US LOOK TO TODAY--TO WHAT IS AND WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT.

7. AS YOU KNOW, OUR TWO COUNTRIES ARE CURRENTLY ENGAGED IN NEGOTIATIONS AIMED TO RE-DEFINING THE RELATIONSHIP

BETWEEN US DURING THE LIFETIME OF THE TREATY. I KNOW

THAT SOME AMERICANS LOOK ON THIS PROCESS AS A KIND OF "GIVE AWAY"--A RETREAT FROM A VALUED POSSESSION. WE PANAMANIAN LOOK AT IT QUITE DIFFERENTLY--AS A WAY BY WHICH WE CAN SLOWLY RECOVER WHAT IS RIGHTFULLY OURS.

8. THERE ARE A GREAT MANY ARGUMENTS MADE ON ALL SIDES OF EACH ONE OF THE QUESTIONS THAT ARISE IN THIS PROCESS OF PROPOSED CHANGE--BOTH HERE IN THE UNITED STATES AND IN PANAMA AS WELL. BUT I BELIEVE THE HEART OF THE MATTER THAT EMERGES FROM CAREFUL ANALYSIS IS THIS: THE UNITED STATES CANNOT RETAIN INDEFINITELY WHAT IT HAS TODAY IN PANAMA WITHOUT PANAMANIAN CONSENT; AT THE SAME TIME, PANAMA CANNOT TAKE AWAY FROM THE UNITED STATES WHAT THE U.S. NOW HAS WITHOUT ITS CONSENT.

9. TO BETTER ASSERT THIS REALITY, LET ME EXPLAIN THAT THE U.S. COULD RETAIN WHAT IT HAS DURING A LIMITED PERIOD OF TIME AND AT A HIGH COST; BUT PANAMA CAN DEPRIVE THE U.S. OF THE USE OF IT ALSO AT A HIGH COST.

10. I MUST SAY TODAY THAT IN PANAMA THERE IS A GROWING TENDENCY, SPECIALLY AMONG THE YOUNG, TO BEGIN THE ALTERNATIVE ROUTE TO THE NEGOTIATIONS TO ACHIEVE THE SOLUTION OF THIS PROBLEM. IF THE PRESENT COURSE OF EVENTS IS NOT CORRECTED ON TIME BY THE U.S. IT IS MY FIRM OPINION THAT WE WILL GET INTO A VIOLENT PROCESS OF EROSION WITH UNPREDICTABLE CONSEQUENCES IN WHICH BOTH SIDES WILL LOSE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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PRICELESS VALUES.

11. FOR THESE REASONS AND MANY OTHERS MY GOVERNMENT BELIEVES THE MOST FEASIBLE AND INTELLIGENT WAY OF RECONCILING THE POSITIONS OF TWO CIVILIZED NATIONS LIES WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE TWO EXTREME NATIONALIST POSITIONS WHICH AS WE KNOW, IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IS CALLED A NEGOTIATED TREATY. A BRIDGE, BETWEEN THE "NEVER GIVE AWAY ANYTHING" AND THE "RECOVER ALL IMMEDIATELY." THIS BRIDGE IN OUR OPINION CAN ONLY BE A SIMPLE PROCESS BY WHICH WITHIN A REASONABLE PERIOD OF TIME AND IN AN ORDERLY WAY PANAMA TAKES FULL CONTROL OF ALL ITS TERRITORY AND INSTALLATIONS WITHIN, INCLUDING THE CANAL.

12. THE LAST PART OF THIS 72 YEAR OLD NEGOTIATION BEGAN IN 1964 AFTER MANY PANAMANIAN WERE KILLED BY THE U.S. ARMY AND IT ALL STARTED BY A GROUP OF PANAMANIAN STUDENTS PACIFICALLY MARCHING TO THE CANAL ZONE WITH OUR FLAG. THE LAST ROUND OF THIS ELEVEN YEARS OLD NEGOTIATION HAS BEEN

UNDERTAKEN BY OUR FOREIGN MINISTER, JUAN ANTONIO TACK
AND AMBASSADOR AT LARGE ELLSWORTH BUNKER.

13. ALTHOUGH OUR PATIENCE IS WEARING THIN, WE SHALL
OVERCOME THESE DIFFICULTIES, BECAUSE AS OUR CHIEF OF
GOVERNMENT, GENERAL OMAR TORRIJOS RECENTLY STATED, WHEN
THE PEOPLE OF A NATION ARE DETERMINED TO BE FREE AND
INDEPENDENT, THEY SUCCEED; AND PANAMA IS TODAY MORE
DETERMINED THAN EVER TO BE COMPLETELY FREE AND INDEPENDENT

14. EVEN THOUGH I MAY BE ABUSING OF YOUR HOSPITALITY, I
CONSIDER THIS TO BE A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU TO LEARN,
THROUGH PANAMA'S OWN VOICE, THE PRESENT STATE OF THE
NEGOTIATIONS. I WILL PRESENT IN A BRIEF FORM THE MAIN
POINTS OF AGREEMENT AND DISAGREEMENTS FROM AN OFFICIAL
REPORT PUBLISHED IN PANAMA ONLY LAST WEEK.

15. THE POINTS OF AGREEMENTS ARE:

ON THE SUBJECT OF JURISDICTION:

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IT HAS BEEN AGREED THAT THREE YEARS AFTER THE APPROVAL
OF THE NEW TREATY THE CANAL ZONE DISAPPEARS AND PANAMA
ASSUMES JURISDICTION OVER THAT TERRITORY.

ON THE SUBJECT OF ADMINISTRATION:

(A) THE PANAMA CANAL COMPANY DISAPPEARS, AND AN ENTITY
WILL BE CREATED IN WHICH BOTH COUNTRIES WILL BE REPRESENTED.

(B) THE EMPLOYMENT OF PANAMANIAN IN THE ADMINISTRATION
OF THE CANAL WILL BE CARRIED OUT IN AN INCREASING MANNER,
SO THAT UPON THE TERMINATION OF THE TREATY, THE CANAL
WILL BE OPERATED EXCLUSIVELY BY PANAMANIAN.

ON THE SUBJECT OF DEFENSE:

(A) THE DEFENSE OF THE CANAL WILL BE CARRIED OUT JOINTLY
BY BOTH COUNTRIES. IN THE EVENT OF AN ARMED ATTACK BY
THIRD POWERS, THE UNITED STATES WILL HAVE PRIMARY RIGHT
OF DEFENSE DURING THE LIFETIME OF THE TREATY.

(B) PANAMA'S MILITARY PARTICIPATION WILL BE ON AN IN-
CREASING SCALE.

16. NOW, I WILL PRESENT THE MAJOR POINTS OF DISAGREEMENT:

ON DURATION OF THE TREATY:

PANAMA PROPOSES A REASONABLE PERIOD OF DURATION FOR THE TREATY THAT WILL NOT BE EXTENDED BEYOND THE END OF THIS CENTURY. THE UNITED STATES, IN ITS LATEST PROPOSAL, ACCEPTS A PERIOD OF 25 YEARS AS DURATION FOR THE CANAL TREATY, BUT ONE OF 50 YEARS FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE WATERWAY. FURTHER, THE UNITED STATES INSIST THAT AFTER 50 YEARS, THEY WILL HAVE THE RIGHT TO CONTINUE DEFENDING THE CANAL FOR AN INDEFINITE PERIOD OF TIME, WHICH IS EQUIVALENT TO PERPETUITY.

PANAMA HAS EMPHATICALLY REJECTED THIS PROPOSAL.

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ON DEFENSE SITES:

THE UNITED STATES PROPOSES THAT THE EXISTING 14 MILITARY BASES BE MAINTAINED FOR THE DURATION OF THE DEFENSE TREATY. AS A NEGOTIATING POSITION, PANAMA PROPOSES THE EXISTENCE OF UP TO THREE DEFENSE SITES, PROVIDED THAT SUCH SITES WILL NOT BE CLOSE TO THE CITIES OF PANAMA AND COLON, AND THAT THEY COME UNDER A SCHEDULE OF DISMANTLEMENT DURING THE PERIOD OF DURATION OF THE NEW TREATY.

ON LANDS AND WATERS:

PANAMA PROPOSES, FOR PURPOSES OF ADMINISTRATION OF THE CANAL, A STRIP BORDERING ON THE CANAL (ALSO SUBJECT TO PANAMANIAN JURISDICTION) FOR WAREHOUSES, MAINTENANCE, SHOPS, ETC. THIS STRIP IS EQUIVALENT TO TEN PER CENT (10) APPROXIMATELY OF THE LAND WHICH AT PRESENT CONSTITUTES THE CANAL ZONE. THE UNITED STATES PROPOSES, FOR PURPOSES OF ADMINISTRATION AND DEFENSE, SECTIONS OF LANDS AND WATERS THAT IS EQUIVALENT TO EIGHTY-FIVE (85) PER CENT OF THE PRESENT CANAL ZONE, FOR THE DURATION OF THE NEW TREATY. PANAMA HAS REJECTED THIS PROPOSAL.

ON COMPENSATION OR ANNUITY:

PANAMA INSIST THAT THIS SUBJECT WILL BE DISCUSSED ONLY AFTER THE MAIN SUBJECTS ON JURISDICTION, DEFENSE AND DURATION ARE AGREED UPON.

ON THE STATUS OF THE U.S. CITIZENS THAT WORK IN THE CANAL:

THE UNITED STATES PROPOSES SYSTEMS AIMED AT MAINTAINING THE PRIVILEGES OF ITS CITIZENS WHO WORK IN THE CANAL AND EXCLUDING THEM FROM PANAMANIAN JURISDICTION, FOR THE DURATION OF THE NEW TREATY. PANAMA HAS SET FORTH THE ALTERNATIVE THAT THE PRIVILEGES OF THOSE CITIZENS SHOULD

GRADUALLY DISAPPEAR, WHILE RETAINING CERTAIN GUARANTEES FOR THEIR JOBS, BUT WITHOUT DETRIMENT TO PANAMANIAN JURISDICTION.

ON EXPANSION OR NEW WORKS:
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IN THE EIGHT-POINT TACK-KISSINGER DECLARATION, IT WAS AGREED THAT BOTH COUNTRIES WOULD AGREE IN THE NEW TREATY ON THE EXPANSION OF THE PRESENT CANAL OR ON NEW WORKS (SEA LEVEL CANAL). HOWEVER, IN ITS LATEST PRESENTATION, THE UNITED STATES PROPOSES, AS ITS UNILATERAL RIGHT, THE CARRYING OUT OF THE EXPANSION OF THE PRESENT CANAL OR OF NEW WORKS.

PANAMA HAS REJECTED THIS PROPOSAL.

ON NEUTRALITY:

PANAMA HAS PROPOSED THAT THE NEUTRALITY OF THE CANAL MUST BE EFFECTIVE AND MUST BE GUARANTEED BY ALL COUNTRIES THROUGH THE UNITED NATIONS. THE UNITED STATES HAD ACCEPTED THIS PANAMANIAN PROPOSAL, BUT HAS CHANGED THAT POSITION IN ITS LATEST PROPOSAL AND NOW PROPOSES TO MAINTAIN WHAT IT UNDERSTANDS AS NEUTRALITY IN RELATION TO THE EXCLUSIVE INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES.

PANAMA HAS REJECTED THIS PROPOSAL.

17. AS WE HAVE SEEN, THE PRESENT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PANAMA AND THE UNITED STATES IS THAT THE UNITED STATES PROPOSES A MODERNIZATION OF OUR RELATIONSHIP THAT IN ESSENCE WILL MAINTAIN THE 'STATUS QUO', WHILE PANAMA PROPOSES THROUGH A NEGOTIATED PROCESS THE PERFECTIONING OF ITS INDEPENDENCE WITH THE ELIMINATION OF THE PRESENT COLONIAL ENCLAVE AND ALL ITS INJURIOUS ELEMENTS WITHIN A REASONABLE PERIOD OF TIME, THAT IS BY THE YEAR 2000.

18. FINALLY, I MUST SAY THAT WE SHALL CONTINUE IN THE SEARCH OF A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION IN WHICH THE UNITED STATES IS EXPECTED TO COMPLY WITH ITS IDEALS OF LIBERTY AND INDEPENDENCE THAT CONVERTED THE OLD THIRTEEN ENGLISH COLONIES INTO THIS GREAT NATION.

19. THANK YOU VERY MUCH. KISSINGER

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